

What is claimed is:

1. An airbag for protecting an occupant, comprising:

a left half airbag to be inflated on a front left side of the occupant and having a left base end portion and a left front end portion,

a right half airbag to be inflated on a front right side of the occupant and having a right base end portion and a right front end portion,

partitioning means disposed in the airbag for partitioning the left half airbag into the left base end portion and the left front end portion, and the right half airbag into the right base end portion and the right front end portion, and

opening means formed in the partitioning means for communicating each of the base end portion and the front end portion of the left and right half airbags.

2. An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said partition means includes a partitioning wall, and said opening means includes openings formed in the partitioning wall.

3. An airbag according to claim 2, wherein one of said left half airbag and right half airbag has a capacity larger than that of the other of the left half airbag and right half airbag, and one of said openings in the partition wall communicating with the one of the left half airbag and right half airbag has an area larger than that of the other of the openings.

4. An airbag according to claim 2, further comprising closing means for closing the openings in the partition wall until a gas pressure in the base end portion reaches a predetermined level.

5. An airbag according to claim 4, wherein said closing means includes a tear seam.

5 6. An airbag according to claim 2, wherein said partition wall has a lower part and an upper part, said lower part being located away from a base end of the airbag more than the upper part.

7. An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said opening means
10 opens when a gas pressure of each of the base end portions reaches a predetermined level.

8. An airbag according to claim 7, wherein said partitioning means is a tear seam.

15

9. An airbag according to one of claim 1, wherein said left half airbag and right half airbag have front ends spaced apart from each other so that a space facing the occupant is formed between the front ends of the left half airbag and the right half airbag
20 when the airbag is inflated.

10. An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said left and right base end portions communicate with each other so that the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated by a common
25 inflator.

11. An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said left half airbag and said right half airbag are connected together at intermediate portions thereof in a direction that the airbag is inflated.

30

12. An airbag according to claim 1, further comprising restricting means attached to the airbag for restricting widths of the left half airbag and right half airbag when the airbag is inflated.

5

13. An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said base end portion is arranged so that the base end portion is inflated toward the occupant along an upper surface of an instrument panel, and has a lower front end projecting from a rim of the upper surface of the instrument panel when the airbag is inflated.

14. An airbag system comprising the airbag according to claim 1 and an inflator for inflating the airbag.

15. An airbag according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said left half airbag and said right half airbag includes an inclined upper portion.

16. An airbag according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said left half airbag and said right half airbag includes a portion having a thickness gradually decreasing upwardly when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated.

17. An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said distal ends of the left half airbag and the right half airbag are separated by a distance of 150 - 350 mm when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are deployed.